

DELAWARE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
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Dear Karen,

I am writing this as I understand that you are involved in the decisions that will shape the future of our Indian River Power Plant. I am not an environmentalist, and I have no political agenda. I became familiar with the problems of this power plant after my own health crisis. Once I did become aware of how the power plant has polluted our air for decades, I was even more amazed that very little has been done about it!

I moved to Rehoboth Beach 13 years ago from the Washington D.C. area. My husband is in the Restaurant business and we have two daughters, ages 7 and 9. My symptoms started shortly after my husband and I moved into a house on Rehoboth Bay. My arms and legs started to tingle at all times. I saw several doctors and had many tests. I had everything from allergy tests to brain scans - no one could diagnose my problem. I started to do my own research and found that all of my symptoms were common for mercury toxicity. A test I had last year confirmed that I have high mercury. The treatment for heavy metal toxicity is controversial, so I have not had the treatment yet. This spring my symptoms became worse. We moved out of our house during some renovations and just two weeks after we moved back in I developed muscle twitching.

In my research I tried to figure out why I had such high levels of mercury. I eat seafood, but rarely eat large fish like tuna. Several of the reports I read said that living within 30 miles of a coal burning power plant significantly increased risks of mercury toxicity and other illnesses. I then came to discover that the Indian River Power Plant right across the Bay from me is one of the dirtiest in our country! What is worse is that our state legislators have known this for decades and done very little about it. It also seems very clear that the only reason this power plant is required to clean up now is because of impending federal regulations. It is undisputed that there is technology available today to reduce the emissions of toxic wastes from this plant by 90%. This technology is probably expensive, but if NRG can afford to build a new power plant, they can afford to fix the old one - the old plant that has caused pollution for us and profit for them for years! I can't understand why the state isn't requiring this plant to adhere to the strictest clean-up! It is also amazing to me that the state is considering allowing this same company to build another power plant at Indian River. I understand that the new plant will be a lot cleaner, but it will still ADD to the pollution of the old plant.

I have also read that the particulate in the air from the power plant emissions can cause asthma and lung issues and allergy issues. I have two small children who are healthy, but I think it is strange that a large number of the children they play with and know have asthma. One friend that lives close by has 3 sons that all have asthma - a condition that she and her husband don't have in their family history. Another friend who moved here 5 years ago has had problems with ear infections and allergies for the past 4 years. A specialist told her that her problems were not uncommon and that the air in our county was a factor. I have met two women and one man in our area that have the same neurological symptoms that I do. I have also met other people in our area that have unexplained health issues and have tested high for mercury. It is becoming increasingly obvious to many how horribly the power plant has affected our health.

Government is supposed to serve and protect it's people, not it's industry. Please don't allow NRG to build this new plant unless they agree to close the old plant down. Please hold them to the highest standards in cleaning the emissions from the old plant. Most importantly, please have the courage and the foresight to give wind power a chance. I have read the recent articles about Willet Kempton's wind power study for our coast. It appears that wind power will offer our state sustainable clean power, jobs and most importantly a healthy place to live. Even NRG who owns the filthy Indian River Plant has recently invested in wind power in California. If the money can be raised for a brand new plant that has tested, but brand new technology, doesn't it make more sense to put that money towards the proven benefits of new wind technology? There is so much to lose by allowing NRG to build their coal burning dynasty and so much to gain by giving wind power a chance.

I love Delaware and I want to raise my children here. Please help make our state a safe environment for my family. Thank you!

Sincerely,